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RR RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHKUK RUEHTRO
DE RUCNDT #0888/01 2822146

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

R 092146Z OCT 09

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7295
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1247
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 0001
RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 0668
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RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 0616
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 3290
RUEHMRE/AMCONSUL MARSEILLE 0037

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 USUN NEW YORK 000888

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [UNGA](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [AORC](#) [KPKO](#) [SW](#) [UK](#) [IT](#) [AR](#)
TI, CH, MN, CO, RS, SF, EZ, ES, EK, DR, IR, BL, UP, PL, AS
SUBJECT: UN GENERAL DEBATE CONTINUES (SEPTEMBER 23 PM):
IRAN AND OTHERS

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¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The September 23rd afternoon session of the General debate saw the U.S. delegation walk out of Iranian President Ahmedinejad's fiery diatribe against the U.S. and Israel. The Iranian President derided capitalist economic systems, defended recent election results, and condemned both the U.S. and Israel for a wide array of recent global ills. President Morales of Bolivia followed with stinging remarks against U.S. military intervention in Latin America. China pledged support for those countries hit hard by the economic crisis, while affirming its support for non-proliferation efforts. Russia's President blasted Georgia for its actions in South Ossetia, while lauding President Obama for his decision to reverse plans on the U.S. missile defense system. Many leaders used their time to call for countries to take immediate steps to curtail climate change, to bemoan the plight of developing countries, to call for structural reforms in the wake of the financial crisis, and to offer support for steps aimed at nuclear non-proliferation. A number of countries offered optimistic comments on the direction the U.N. might take under President Obama. Full text of statements available on at www.un.org/ga/64/generaldebate, video archives are at www.un.org/webcast/2009.html. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) SWEDEN: Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), welcomed the U.S.'s wish to work with multilateral institutions. He highlighted the EU's climate change goals to reduce emissions by 25-40 percent from 1990 levels by 2020. Reinfeldt reaffirmed the EU's commitment towards human rights, the empowerment of women and gender equality (UNSCR 1325/1820), the International Criminal Court, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and support for U.S. efforts in the Mideast peace process. Reinfeldt also urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to renounce nuclear weapons and called on Iran and Burma to ensure human rights. Finally, he

reaffirmed the EU's support for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Alliance of Civilizations. His statement that the EU continues to call for the worldwide abolition of the death penalty was met with applause,

¶3. (U) ITALY: Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi provided a summary of the July 8-10 G-8 meeting in L'Aquila July 8-10 and the issues to be discussed at the G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh. In L'Aquila, the G-8 focused on banking/financial regulation, climate change, food security (including the creation of a USD 20 billion fund for agricultural development), and countering stock market speculation and the manipulation of commodity and energy markets. Berlusconi also proposed a global system of strategic commodities reserve to prevent speculation and he criticized tax havens. Finally, with regard to UN Security Council reform, "new national permanent members would simply increase the sense of exclusion of all countries that contribute."

¶4. (U) UNITED KINGDOM: Prime Minister Gordon Brown began his speech, in contrast to Qadhafi's (Libya), stating "I stand here to reaffirm the UN Charter, not to tear it up," which drew immediate applause from the members. He identified five global challenges requiring global "momentous" decisions: climate change, terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, shared prosperity, and poverty/MDG's. Brown highlighted the importance of the Summit on Climate Change in Copenhagen and announced that he plans to attend and asked other world leaders to as well. He called for an "Afghanization" strategy requiring Afghanistan taking a greater responsibility for its security. He characterized the UNSC Summit resolution (September 24) on nuclear non-proliferation

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as a "vital" move towards the April 2010 Global Nuclear Security Summit. He warned Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that the world will be tougher on proliferation and that further sanctions could be possible. To help non nuclear countries that are ready to renounce nuclear weapons, Brown said that the UK will sponsor a uranium bank to support civil nuclear power as well as a new nuclear center of excellence to develop a low carbon nuclear fuel cycle. With regard to shared prosperity, Brown said the G-20 must ensure the economic recovery does not falter and that stronger economic coordination is necessary. This must be done through comprehensive reforms of the financial sector (specifically targeting tax havens). Finally, Brown exhorted member nations not to forget about the MDGs and applauded the free universal health care plans announced by Burundi, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Nepal, Liberia, and Ghana.

¶5. (U) ARGENTINA: President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner stated her intention to talk about the current socioeconomic crisis but recent developments in Honduras had forced her to change it; several days ago, Argentina's Embassy in Honduras (as well as the Brazilian Embassy) had its power cut off because of its support for ousted President Zelaya. She criticized Iran for not allowing the extradition of several Iranian suspects sought in the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires (one of whom is now a minister in the Iranian government). Kirchner highlighted several encouraging developments: the recent visit of the Inter American Commission on Human Rights to Argentina to review crimes under the previous dictatorship; and the recent bill to protect freedom of the press.

¶6. (U) TAJIKISTAN: President Emomali Rahmon focused his speech on what his country has done to promote disarmament, prohibit land mines, and stop illicit drug trafficking. Rahmon supports stability in Afghanistan and an integrated approach in the use of natural resources to combat climate change.

¶7. (U) CHINA: President Hu Jintao promoted globalization and mutual cooperation. He said that China continues to stand

for the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons and promotes peaceful use of nuclear energy. Hu believes the UN needs to advance development and counter the financial crisis by increasing trade and completing the Doha Round. According to Hu, food, energy and public health security as well as climate change are all global problems which need to be addressed through international cooperation. China will increase its support to countries hit hard by the financial crisis and will continue efforts to reach the MDGs.

¶18. (U) MONACO: H.S.H. Prince Albert II emphasized Monaco's support for the implementation of the MDGs by 2015. He said that economic assistance to countries hit hard by the financial meltdown must increase during this crisis, not decrease. Prince Albert reiterated Monaco's commitment to the Summit on Climate Change in Copenhagen and supports the goal to reduce carbon emissions by 20 percent by 2020. Finally, he called on the G-20 to resolve the financial crisis and for the United Nations to continue its peacekeeping operations.

¶19. (U) COLUMBIA: President Alvaro Uribe Velez focused most of his speech on Colombia's advances against drug traffickers and guerillas. Uribe stated that Colombia has dismantled "paramilitarism" and regained its ability to combat criminals and deliver justice to terrorists. Colombia plans to take a tough stance not only on drug production but on drug consumption. He blamed the current economic crisis on

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speculation and is worried about a new era of protectionism. Colombia supports the Summit on Climate Change in Copenhagen, as it is a net producer of oxygen, and is in favor of stricter international conventions with effective binding instruments.

¶10. (U) RUSSIAN FEDERATION: President Dmitry Medvedev divided his speech into five themes: (1) the timing of UNGA, (2) existing problems, (3) disarmament, (4) regional security, and (5) human rights. Medvedev said this session was taking place during a crucial time in history (the "first wide-scale crisis of the globalization era"). He listed disruption of the MDGs, unemployment and social problems as current dilemmas and suggested increased donor assistance, improved energy security, and reform of the Security Council as possible solutions. Medvedev explained the Russian Federation's support for disarmament such as the Russian-Chinese initiative on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space and the recent treaty with the U.S. He also lauded President Obama's change in policy towards a missile defense system. With regard to regional security, Medvedev promoted regional peace and criticized Georgia for its use of force in South Ossetia. Finally, he emphasized the protection of human rights and called for the establishment of a High Level Group on Interreligious Dialogue. He closed his remarks by disparaging those who attempt to "whitewash Nazism, to deny the Holocaust, (or) revise the decisions of the Nuremberg Tribunal."

¶11. (U) SOUTH AFRICA: President Jacob Zuma observed that 2009 marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 44/27 which signaled UN support for the eradication of apartheid. Zuma, like others, commented that developing countries did not cause the economic crisis yet they are bearing the brunt of it and that it should not be an excuse to delay the MDGs. He urged conclusion of the Doha Round, promoted nuclear non-proliferation and called for the lifting of the trade embargo on Cuba. Zuma blamed climate change on the developed countries and wanted Copenhagen to result in quantified, legally binding emission reductions. He also called for the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. Finally, he advocated for a resolution to declare 18 July as Nelson Mandela day.

¶12. (U) CZECH REPUBLIC: President Vaclav Klaus argued that the economic crisis will lead to protectionism and set the blame squarely on governments, not markets. Too much regulation, he cautioned, would be a tragic mistake; business cycles will always exist. He also briefly mentioned Czech Republic support for Security Council reform.

¶13. (U) EL SALVADOR: President Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena described his new government's efforts to strengthen democracy within El Salvador; he is committed to raise the country out of the economic crisis and move it toward social inclusion, peace and security, and fair economic distribution. He noted the contributions by overseas El Salvadorans and is looking forward to the Third Global Forum on Migration and Development in Athens November 4-5. He backed exiled Honduran President Zelaya and stated that the world cannot permit such a setback in the region. Funes supported the MDGs, called for the reform of the UN's principal organs, promoted the conclusion of the Doha Round, and agreed that climate change needs to be addressed.

¶14. (U) EQUITORIAL GUINEA: President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's remarks urged nations to consider a reordering of

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the global economic system in order to more equitably distribute wealth and to alleviate conditions of poverty in developing countries. Mbasogo pointed out that only 20% of the Millennium Development Goals have not been met. Mbasogo bemoaned that his country had become a victim of attacks and attempts to control the country's natural resources despite the claim that Equatorial Guinea has always been a peace-loving country that has worked towards international cooperation.

¶15. (U) DOMINICAN REPUBLICAN: The remarks by President Leonel Fernandez Reyna were focused mostly on economic themes, with a particular emphasis on the grave impacts that the financial crisis has had on vulnerable communities and developing countries. Reyna called for the international community to work towards creating a greater distribution of wealth to take strides at alleviating poverty. On the matter of the recent coup in Honduras, the President expressed strong support for the Zelaya government and remarked that his actions have been, "a great show of personal courage and audacity." Prodding the international community to take a strong stance against the coup, Reyna said, "We must show the same level of commitment."

¶16. (U) IRAN: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speech was pointedly anti-U.S. and anti-Israel, while taking particular aim against capitalist economic systems. The President's most injurious remarks conjured up the anti-Semitic concept of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, noting that, "It is no longer acceptable that a small minority would dominate the politics, economy and culture of major parts of the world by its complicated networks, and establish a new form of slavery, and harm the reputation of other nations, even European nations and the U.S., to attain its racist ambitions." (See notes below on U.S. delegation walkout.) Ahmadinejad often referred to the U.S. in a thinly guised veil, at one point noting that, "It is not acceptable that some who are several thousands of kilometers away from the Middle East would send their troops for military intervention and for spreading war, bloodshed, aggression, terror and intimidation." At no point did Ahmadinejad refer to the U.S. by name, but continued to offer stinging comments, clearly referring to the U.S. military budget, its powerful role in the Security Council, and his assessment that America is responsible for a host of global ills. The President spent considerable time decrying the capitalist system of the West, referring to capitalism as an "unfair system of thought." Ahmadinejad pressed nations to move towards greater faith and religiosity, portraying Iran as a successful country owing to its piousness. Referring to the recent hostilities in Gaza, Ahmadinejad called this a "22-day barbaric attack by the

Zionist regime." Speaking of the recent and highly controversial Iranian Presidential election, Ahmadinejad defended the results, firmly declaring that "our nation has successfully gone through a glorious and fully-democratic election."

¶17. (SBU) US DELEGATION WALKS OUT OF IRAN SPEECH: The line alluding to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion was agreed to have crossed the previously established Redlines for the U.S. delegation to exit the speech. The U.S. left at the point that this line was spoken and was then followed almost immediately by other countries. Canada had walked out at the start of the speech. Immediately following the walk-out by the U.S. and other delegations, delegates convened on the sidelines and compared notes regarding the Redlines, as well as comparing the list of the countries that had left. Based on observation and discussions with delegates, at least 17 countries walked-out including: Argentina, Australia, Canada,

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Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, New Zealand, Palau, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and the United States. Notably, the delegations of Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Sweden remained. Conversations indicated some countries had made the decision to leave based on pre-established red-lines, while others decided to follow the lead of other delegations.

¶18. (U) BOLIVIA: President Evo Morales Ayma had harsh words for the U.S. in the already charged atmosphere following Ahmadinejad's speech. (Note: The Iranian leader remained present for his speech). Morales focused his criticism on U.S. military bases in Latin America, on economic blockades and tariffs that he claimed are "direct interference of the United States" in the affairs of sovereign countries and then declared, "We know what uniformed personnel of the United States can do in a country." Morales strongly defended the right of his country to grow coca, saying "the coca plant is one thing, cocaine is another." Morales echoed the support of other regional leaders for the ousted Honduran President Zelaya and urged the U.N. to "issue an ultimatum" to the de facto government in order to restore Zelaya's power. Despite a rhetorical theme of criticizing the role of the U.S. in Latin America and beyond, Morales noted that, "I have great hope for President Obama." He specifically praised the decision of the U.S. to close the detention center at Guantanamo Bay, but then called for the blockade against Cuba to be lifted. Morales urged the U.N. to reform the Security Council, emphasizing a need to end the veto.

¶19. (U) UKRAINE: President Victor Yushchenko focused on the themes of freedom in the early part of his speech, reflecting on the history of the U.N. and lamenting on how far the world and his country have come since the bipolar order dominated the agenda. He noted that "As a free nation, we shall not accept any forms of interference into the internal affairs of sovereign countries." Yushchenko emphasized the need for countries to maintain territorial integrity and to reject authoritarianism and interference. The President devoted several minutes of his speech to the fight against piracy, pointing out the risks, and urging that the issue be considered not only a local matter, but a global one. He clearly stated Ukraine's commitment to combating piracy in all ways necessary.

¶20. (U) POLAND: President Lech Kaczynski encouraged members to take advantage of the new direction the U.N. may take while President Obama is in office, declaring that "this will be a phase of its (the U.N.'s) greatness." Kaczynski commented that President Obama's promise to take a new direction with the U.N. also implied a responsibility for the other member states to embrace the moment. He used much of his time to address ways of working through the financial crisis and suggested that that the Bretton Woods organization be reformed. He added that U.N. institutions including the ILO could be better used in addressing global economic

stress. Kaczynski also spoke about the importance of territorial integrity, emphasizing Georgia's case as an example of where the use of force has been used illegally.

¶21. (U) AUSTRALIA: Prime Minister Kevin Rudd called on member states to think seriously about climate change, urging them to reach a "grand bargain" to avoid its most catastrophic effects. Rudd laid out the conflict between developing and developed countries on this issue and recognized that competing claims make forging an agreement challenging. He agreed that the arguments of both sides have validity, but that countries must look beyond their self-interest if any progress can take place. Rudd spoke about the financial

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crisis and suggested that a restructuring of the economic system is necessary, asking members to "reform the institutions of global government." Rudd finished his speech by imploring nations to cooperate on key issues and reminded nations that the U.N. is a collective, "the U.N. is not a place, it is not an institution, it is us." Rudd urged leaders to take steps for a better future, reminding them that, "the challenge of leadership is to imagine a future worth having."

RICE